

To: Heads of higher and further education institutions in Wales

Reference: W05/45HE

Date: 5 August 2005

Response By: 15 September 2005

Further Information: Alison Allan

HIGHER EDUCATION IN FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES: GUIDANCE/CODE OF PRACTICE

As you may recall, following the evaluation which KPMG undertook in 2003/04 of partnerships relating to HE provision in FE colleges, the Council agreed that it would consider the preparation of guidance/a code of practice for these partnerships. This would primarily focus on franchise arrangements but it was recognised that there were also likely to be aspects which would be relevant to the HE provision which the Council funds directly at some FE colleges.

We would now like to begin work on preparing the guidance. As a first step, we would like to ask HE and FE institutions to submit to us examples of their franchise agreements, or in the case of directly-funded provision, compact or other agreements between FECs and HEIs. From these we would hope to draw together some common themes and issues. If your agreements do not include details of which partner receives/retains fee income, we would be grateful if you could also include this information. We will, of course, treat all information and agreements submitted to us in complete confidence, and any conclusions which we draw and make available to the sector as part of the work on developing the guidance would be presented in an anonymised and/or aggregated form.

You may also be aware that HEFCE produced guidance on indirectly-funded partnerships which operate in England at the end of 2000 and that they also commissioned a review of such agreements in 2003. As many of the issues and principles between such partnerships in England and Wales will be similar, HEFCE have kindly agreed that we may use their documents as a starting point for our work. From the Welsh point of view, it is the sections on "indirectly-funded franchise partnerships" which are most relevant, as we do not also have the consortia arrangements which operate in England. I enclose copies of the two documents concerned.*

We would welcome your initial views on the HEFCE code of practice for indirectly funded franchise partnerships (Part 2 in HEFCE 00/54) in a Welsh context/particular issues which

need to be considered in developing guidance for Wales, as well as on issues raised in the review document which you consider relevant or important.

We will be keeping HEFCE colleagues informed of our progress and of issues which they may also find of interest in the context of HE/FE partnerships in England.

Once we have prepared a draft code, taking into account the initial feedback which we receive from institutions, we will hold a wide-ranging consultation exercise during October/November. As well as inviting written responses on the draft document, we are also planning to hold a consultation event. Following the consultation period, we would prepare the final version of the Code with a view to issuing it in February 2006.

We look forward to hearing from you. Please reply to Alison Allan by 15 September 2005.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Gummert', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

PHILIP GUMMETT

* Not included. The documents may be accessed at:

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2000/00_54.htm

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2003/03_57/